

In the Specification

Replacement paragraphs are presented below indicating the changes with insertions indicated by underlining and deletions indicated by strikeouts and/or double bracketing.

Please replace paragraph 2 beginning at page 19, line 11 with the amended paragraph/line as follows:

--In the illustrated embodiment, the variable speed embossing cylinder drive motor can be operated to rotate cylinder 112 in the direction of arrow ~~140~~ 143 (i.e., in a direction opposite that of the motion 122 of fabric 111) or, more preferably, in the direction of arrow 142 (i.e., in the same direction as the direction 122 of fabric 111).--

Please replace paragraph 2 beginning at page 31, line 20 with the amended paragraph/line as follows:

-- In addition, it is preferred to adjust the vertical position of fabric support roller 104 and fabric 111 such that the upper most surface 113 of pile layer 16 is separated from external surface portion 233 of stencil 128, which surface portion 233 is opposite internal surface portion 218 and is positioned directly adjacent and above pile layer 16, by a distance not exceeding about 0.02 inch. In other embodiments, fabric-facing surface portion 233 of stencil 128 is positioned from the embossable surface of ~~pile air 16~~ pile layer 16 by a distance not exceeding about 0.01 inch, in other embodiments by a distance not exceeding 0.005 inch, and yet in other embodiments by a distance not exceeding about 0.001 inch. Thus, it is desirable that the distance between surface portion 233 and pile layer 16 be very small but without surface portion 233 actually making physical contact with pile layer 16, which would tend to distort the pile air and create undesirable visual artifacts. As previously mentioned, variation in the distance separating fabric surface 113 and surface portion 233 during rotation owing to irregularities in the shape or centering of stencil 128 causing "run out" can seriously impair or make impossible the achievement of the above mentioned desired separation distances without incurring artifacts due to contact of the stencil with the fabric. The disclosure also describes means for stabilizing the

rotation of the stencil to overcome or reduce this problem. Such means are discussed in much greater detail below.--

Please replace paragraph 2 beginning at page 39, line 28 with the amended paragraph/line as follows:

-- FIG. 6a illustrates an alternative embodiment of an air lance. Air lance 300, as shown in FIG. 6a, has a nozzle region 302 of main body portion 304 positioned so that it is facing the observer. FIG. 6b shows air lance 300 in a side view. Air lance 300 comprises a conduit having a main body portion 304 and includes an inlet opening 306 and a threaded inlet connector 308, allowing attachment of the air lance to air supply line 114 of the air embossing system when it is in operation. Main body portion 304 is essentially constant in diameter along its entire length. Main body portion 304 includes an inlet region 310 upstream of nozzle region 302 and may, optionally, include a small end region 312 downstream of nozzle region 302 and upstream of sealed end 314 of the main body portion. In alternative embodiments, ~~air lance 310~~ air lance 300, or any other air lance illustrated herein, may, instead of having a single inlet opening for attachment to the air supply, have each of its ends open for fluid communication and attachable to an air supply. Affixed to downstream end 314 of main body portion 304 is mounting shaft 316 including an alignment slot 318 (seen most clearly in FIG. 6b), which mounting shaft typically has a diameter that is smaller than the diameter of main body portion 304. --